

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) An immunoagglutination immunoassay ~~for inhibiting decrease in measured values in immunoassays~~, comprising:

mixing a test sample with an agent ~~for inhibiting~~ that inhibits a decrease in measured values in immunoagglutination immunoassays, wherein said decrease is caused by an interfering substance(s) present in the test sample, ~~which~~

wherein said agent is an ionic surfactant having a molecular weight of 1000 to 100,000, and said ionic surfactant being a polymer in which a hydrophobic cyclic monomer(s) having an ionic functional group(s) is(are) polymerized to form a mixture of said test sample and said agent.

11. (Currently Amended) The immunoassay according to claim 10, comprising:

a first step of mixing said test sample with said agent for inhibiting the decrease in measured values in immunoagglutination immunoassays; and

a second step of subjecting said mixture to antigen-antibody immunoagglutination reaction with sensitized particles or with an antiserum to form a reacted mixture.

12. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 11, wherein said test sample is a biological sample.

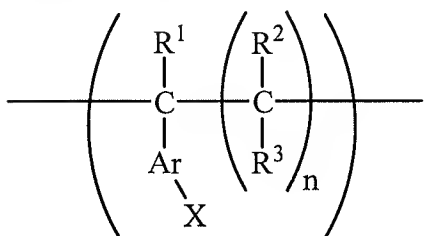
13. (Original) The immunoassay according to claim 12, wherein said test sample is blood, serum or blood plasma.

14. (Currently Amended) The immunoassay according to claim 11, wherein the concentration of said agent for inhibiting the decrease in measured values in immunoassays in reaction solution is 0.01% to 5% (weight/volume).

15-20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 11, further comprising a third step of determining the measured values of a target substance in said reacted mixture.

22. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 11, wherein said polymer comprises a recurring unit represented by the following Formula [I]:



[I]

wherein Ar represents a hydrophobic ring; X represents the ionic functional group; R^1 to R^3 independently represent hydrogen or alkyl; n represents an integer of 0 to 10; hydrogen atom(s) bound to a carbon atom(s) constituting Ar optionally being substituted with a substituent(s) which does(do) not adversely affect the effect of the present invention.

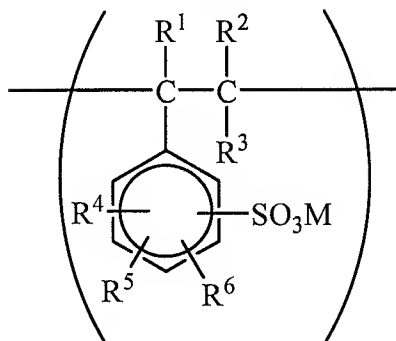
23. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 11 or 22, wherein said hydrophobic cyclic monomer is an aromatic monomer.

24. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 23, wherein said aromatic monomer has a benzene ring.

25. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 11, wherein said ionic functional group is sulfonic group or a salt thereof, carboxylic group or a salt thereof, or an amine.

26. (Previously Presented) The immunoassay according to claim 25, wherein said ionic functional group is sulfonic group or a salt thereof.

27. **(Previously Presented)** The immunoassay according to claim 22, wherein said recurring unit is represented by the following Formula [II]:



[II]

wherein M represents an atom or a group which becomes a monovalent cation in aqueous solution; R¹ to R³ have the same meanings as said R¹ to R³ in said Formula [I]; and R⁴ to R⁶ independently represent hydrogen, lower alkoxy or lower alkyl.

28. **(Previously Presented)** The immunoassay according to claim 25, wherein said recurring unit is an anethole sulfonic acid salt or styrene sulfonic acid salt.

29. **(Previously Presented)** The immunoassay according to claim 22, further comprising a third step of determining the measured values of a target substance in said reacted mixture.

30. **(Previously Presented)** The immunoassay according to claim 27, further comprising a third step of determining the measured values of a target substance in said reacted mixture.